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# The Korean Situation

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## FOREWORD

In July, 1919, the Commission on Relations with the Orient of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America issued a pamphlet entitled "The Korean Situation: An Authentic Account of Recent Events by Eye Witnesses." From the introduction to the pamphlet the following paragraphs may fittingly be quoted by way of introduction to the present statement:

"The Commission wishes to state with utmost clearness that as a Commission it is not concerning itself with the political questions involved in the Korean Independence Movement. Whether or not Korea should be granted political independence is not a question upon which it is called to express judgment. The Commission is, however, concerned with all right-minded men that brutality, torture, inhuman treatment, religious persecution, and massacres shall cease everywhere. The evidence of the wide prevalence of such deeds in Korea has become convincing.

"In dealing with this situation, there is need of an accurately informed and just public opinion, able in its criticism of Japan to discriminate between the reactionary and militaristic forces on the one hand and those that are liberal and progressive on the other hand. Wholesome and fair criticism will recognize the disaster that has come upon the whole world through the spirit and practice of militarism. Japan, too, has been caught in its meshes. But in Japan, too, as in other lands, there is a liberal, anti-militaristic movement, led by humane and progressive men who, we believe, share the distress of mind which their friends in America feel over what is being done in Korea."

Since the publication of that pamphlet events of importance have been taking place in Korea, in Japan and in America. The Commission is in possession of fresh information which it feels should be made public. Friends of Korea and Japan should not only know what the actual situation is but should have accurate facts on which to base their judgments and determine their actions. Conditions are rapidly developing in which are wrapped possibilities both of danger and of hope.

## I—THE INDEPENDENCE UPRISING

### 1. The Political and Psychological Background

Korea was annexed by Japan in 1910. A military Government General was set up which soon established order, introduced a system of rigorous control of the people, and completely disarmed them. It also undertook large enterprises for the betterment of the physical conditions of the land including such matters as improvement of agricultural methods and products, afforestation of the hills, building of roads and railroads, opening of a public school system, enforcement of hygienic conditions, and the introduction of economic facilities such as banks and postal savings. Under this governmental direction the economic, industrial, agricultural and intellectual improvement of the people was marked and unquestioned. At the same time, however, a policy of complete enforced assimilation to Japan was adopted and drastically carried out. The official language of the Government General and the Courts was Japanese, the public school system was designed to eliminate Korean and to use the Japanese language exclusively. With the usual psychological blindness of military rulers who know of no methods save those of compulsion by law or force, Japanese holidays were introduced by "order," patriotism toward Japan was to be displayed and even the worship of the Mikado was enforced in the schools and on public official occasions.

The results were quite contrary to Japanese expectations. The efforts to eliminate the Korean national consciousness served rather to strengthen it. The minute control of Korean life by rigid laws and police regulations, administered by aliens who could not speak the native language, many of whom had no sympathy for the people, but rather despised and treated them as an inferior and conquered race,—became more and more unbearable as the people advanced in general knowledge and understood what was happening in the world at large and also what was happening to them.

When, therefore, the Great War came to an end with the complete downfall of German militarism, and when the victorious nations formally accepted President Wilson's "fourteen points," among which was the principle of "self-determination" of subject peoples, it was altogether natural that patriotic



Koreans should be filled with ardent hope that the day had come for their own liberation from intolerable conditions. They felt that it was necessary for them to make clear to the world how intolerable those conditions were, believing that the Paris Peace Conference was about to give freedom to all subject peoples that made clear the justice of their appeals.

Such in briefest terms was the political and psychological situation in Korea in the winter of 1918-1919.

A brief statement seems desirable as to the strength of the Christian movement in Korea. The population of Korea is approximately 17,000,000. Members of Protestant Churches in December, 1918, numbered 87,278, while "adherents," including "probationers," baptized children and "others," brought the Christian population of Korea up to 219,220. Ordained pastors numbered 231 while unordained workers, Bible teachers and others giving full time to Christian work, brought the total up to 1,226. Contributions of Koreans in support of their Churches amounted in 1918 to Y 379,426.00, approximately \$189,713. Adding the Roman and Greek Catholic enrollments brings the total Christian population up to 318,708.

## 2. The Passive Resistance Uprising

No more remarkable "revolution" has taken place in recent history than that which occurred in Korea beginning March 1, 1919. The plan was to secure independence by moral force, without resort to violence. The "passive" part of the program was carried out with extraordinary success. The thirty-three signers of the "Declaration of Independence" notified the police of their act and of the place where they might be found and arrested. For two months large gatherings of Koreans assembled in hundreds of towns and villages to shout "Mansei"—independence for "ten thousand years." Though fired upon by the police, sabred, bayoneted, arrested, beaten, tortured, and punished by court judgments, the persistence of the movement has been phenomenal, and the slight amount of retaliation by the Koreans has been amazing.

The missionaries were as ignorant of the revolutionary plans as the Government General. Suspicions of the missionaries were at first entertained by the Japanese and charges against them were made, but no responsible Japanese now regards those suspicions and charges as valid. Buddhists as well as

Christians have been active in the movement, and students in government as well as in mission schools.

### 3. Japanese Efforts to Suppress the Movement

The efforts of the police, gendarmes and soldiers to prevent and to suppress the "demonstrations" led to procedures and practices, now widely condemned not only in other lands but by many enlightened Japanese. Churches were burned and entire villages destroyed in efforts of terrorization. It is not necessary to give further detailed statements of these matters. They have been published in many daily and weekly papers and in our own pamphlet on the "Korean Situation." The statistics given out by the Government General of Korea in January, 1920, concerning the facts as reported up to October, 1919, are manifestly incomplete, yet they give some idea of the extent of the movement and of the tragedy that has been taking place.

The total number of villages where demonstrations took place, as reported in May, 1919, was 577. Rioting took place in 236 of these villages, while in 341 the crowds were ordered to disperse and did so without further incident. Of the 236 places where rioting occurred fire-arms were used by the police in 185 places, deaths occurring therefrom in 106 villages.

Japanese (chiefly policemen) killed by Koreans.....	9
Japanese who were wounded.....	186
Koreans killed, 631. Koreans wounded and treated in police or government institutions, 1,409. No statistics are given of the wounded who were treated privately.	
Total number arrested (March 1—July 20, 1919).....	28,934
Flogged and apparently released by order of gendarmes (March 1—July 20) .....	9,078
Examined by Procurators (March 1—October 31, 1919)..	17,999
Set free without trial " " " " " ..	7,116
Committed to trial " " " " " ..	8,993
Sent to prison " " " " " ..	5,156
Sentences remitted on "good behavior" (March 1—October 31, 1919) .....	282
Sent to higher court for retrial (March 1—October 31, 1919) .....	1,838
Flogged by order of Court and set free (March 1—October 31, 1919) .....	1,514
Buildings and Government Offices destroyed.....	209
Churches totally (17) or partially (24) destroyed—included in the above figure (209) .....	41



The aggregate loss on the Churches is roughly estimated  
 at ..... \$30,000  
 This does not include a school building at Osan valued at \$5,000

In the early part of the uprisings, church property was wantonly destroyed by Japanese soldiers and gendarmes in three centers, Sensen, Pyengyang and Suwon. In the latter district "the infamous massacre took place in a Methodist Church, where 13 Christians, 11 Tendokyo believers and two women were shot down in cold blood. In this section whole villages were burned and even one Buddhist temple, along with the Churches." (Japan Advertizer, March 30, 1920.)

Among the tortures and brutalities dwelt on by writers and especially emphasized by the American press were those dealing with young women and school girls who were stripped and examined, tortured and maltreated. No charge is made of rape under these conditions. Inquiry as to the number thus treated brings the reply that no exact statistics are available.

In October and November, 1919, a fresh outburst of torture was resorted to, with new methods not before used in Korea. At the same time the treatment of women was "far more humane."

Dr. F. W. Schofield's persistent efforts in "unearthing cases of torture and exposing them" has apparently had salutary effect. High officials repeatedly denied that there were any tortures. The Chief of Police, Mr. Akaike, has, however, issued a warning to his subordinates—according to the Seoul Press—"that this 'brutal system' must be abolished."

At the annual meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Churches held in October, 1919, statistics were given as to the number of Korean Presbyterians who had suffered because of the Independence Movement. From these statistics the following summary is taken:

Total number arrested .....	3,804
Pastors and Elders arrested .....	134
Helpers and leaders arrested .....	202
Male members arrested .....	2,125
Women arrested .....	531
Beaten and released .....	2,162
Shot and killed .....	41
Beaten to death .....	6
Still in prison .....	1,642
Churches destroyed .....	12

These figures deal only with Presbyterians.

#### 4. Action by the Federated Missions of Japan

On August 6, 1919, the Annual Meeting of the Federated Missions of Japan adopted and published a statement regarding the Korean situation that received serious attention among responsible Japanese leaders. We give it in full:

Knowing Japan as we do at first hand and having enjoyed for many years under Japanese law the blessings of justice and freedom and the fullest protection of life and property, we found it exceedingly difficult to believe that the stories of inhuman cruelty and outrages, committed upon the people of Korea by agents of the Japanese Government in the suppression of the recent uprising, could be true, when these stories first came to our ears. We were inexpressibly shocked and amazed at these reports. We have been forced to believe that the reports are substantially true and that the people of Korea have endured sufferings which are unjust and unnecessary and which might easily be ended once for all, if the methods of administration were divested of that harshness and cruelty which are so strangely at variance with the high and enlightened principles according to which Japan proper is now governed and with that kindheartedness in which Japan as a people abounds.

We have felt, and still feel, confidence in the generous aims of the Imperial Government, whose just and humane principles in the administration of Japan are apparent to us who live in Japan, and to all the world. We have faith in the settled purpose of the Government to bring about reforms wherever such reforms fall within the province of the Government to effect. We bear testimony to the passion for enlightenment which is an indomitable impulse throughout the heart of the nation, and which has brought about such general progress during the half century since Japan was opened to the world.

We have rejoiced in the many improvements brought about in Korea since that country came under the authority of the Japanese Government. We do not wish to condone any mistakes the Korean people may have made nor do we disregard the inherent difficulty always attached to such an administrative task as that in hand in Korea.

But we wish to give clear and public expression to our unmingled sympathy with those of the Korean people to whom recent troubles have brought cruel and unmerited suffering. And we wish to give our moral support—and this is the chief reason for making this statement—to any steps looking to a real and permanent bettering of conditions in Korea.

We cannot refrain from expressing first, our earnest desire that the official administration in that country may become more just and humane, as far as possible free from discrimination, and offer to the Korean people the opportunities for economic advancement for which the human soul everywhere hungers; secondly, that the Korean people



may be permitted to exercise without annoyance or vexation or the haunting presence of spies and police, that liberty of faith and worship which is the very substance of human life and progress; and thirdly, that the Koreans may be given facilities to enjoy to the fullest degree and without discrimination, the advantages of a modern education.

Although up to the present time, there has not been among Japanese that outspoken protest to which one would think an enlightened public opinion would give expression in view of the conditions prescribed, yet we note with much satisfaction evidences now appearing almost daily that an increasing number of Japanese are feeling a sense of responsibility for events in Korea. We are encouraged by the publicity this question has begun to receive in the Japanese press and by the agitation for reform which Japanese leaders are now carrying on. We add our own appeal with the hope that we may contribute thereby, however slightly, to the hastening of reforms in Korea, the urgency of which is so apparent.

We are moved to make this statement by the genuine respect and affection which we have for Japan, and by our desire to identify ourselves wholeheartedly with every aspiration and effort of the Japanese people for the achievement of the highest human welfare and the perfecting of lasting reforms.

## II—THE RESPONSE OF THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT

### 1. Japanese Ignorance of the Situation

When the Independence Uprising occurred the advice of the military censors in Korea and Japan for a time completely prevented news of the situation from being published even in Japan. The first full and connected account of what had happened that reached the public were issued in the American press.

Japanese were loath to believe the reports. As the facts, however, were verified beyond doubt many Japanese were filled with amazement, indignation and shame. They began for the first time to appreciate what their military Government in Korea had been really doing. Not Japanese Christians and civilians alone felt thus, but responsible leaders in the Government also. The result was a response on the part of the Government which in the light of the customary dilatoriness of Governmental response for reform measures was comparatively prompt. From this standpoint it may be said that the Korean Uprising was a remarkable success. A brief recital of the efforts of the Japanese Government to effective remedies throws important light on the developing situation.

## 2. Decision Reached by the Imperial Government in Tokyo

During the months of May and June the Japanese press gave some idea of what was occurring in Korea. Japanese public opinion soon began to express itself. In June a committee was sent to Korea by the Christian Churches of Japan whose report in July produced a deep impression. Already the cablegrams that passed between the Federal Council and the Japanese Government gave assurance that the Government was carefully considering what should be done. In August announcement was made of the resignation of the Governor General Hasegawa in circumstances that apparently implied recall, and of the appointment of Admiral Baron Saito in his place with instructions to introduce appropriate reform measures in harmony with the times. This new policy in general terms was authorized not only by the Cabinet, but by the Privy Council and it is understood, sanctioned by the Emperor. No details of the reform program were made public at that time.

It is highly significant, however, of the new regime that the Government General has been made immediately responsible to the Diet and not solely to the Throne, as heretofore.

## 3. The New Governor General

The new Governor General, Admiral Baron Saito, reached Korea September 2, 1919. While still on the train he gave to press representatives a statement of his policy. In it, among other things, he said that "Ways and means should be opened for people to express their desires and dissatisfactions. There shall be no arbitrary interference in the freedom of speech and press or in that of meetings and associations as long as these do not stand in the way of the maintenance of peace and order. Reforms shall be introduced in the administration of education, industry, police affairs, sanitary and social work and so forth. It is intended to introduce some new features in making life and property securer and in promoting popular happiness. Above all, inasmuch as the improvement of popular manners and customs and the advancement of popular strength and resources depend greatly on the ability of the people to govern themselves, it is intended to put in force local self-government at some opportune time in future. With this in view, the study and investigation thereanent will immediately be taken up."



An attempt was made on the life of the new Governor General upon his arrival in Seoul, in which twenty-nine persons suffered injury, although the Baron himself was unharmed.

After eight months of administration, Dr. Schofield in the first of three striking articles on the "Korean Reforms" in the Japan Advertiser (Tokyo) of March 12th, 13th and 14th, says:

"In face of this handicap (that he was not a civilian) Admiral Saito has already succeeded in winning the confidence and esteem of many Koreans who have come into personal contact with him. The change was . . . from a reactionary militarist to a genial and democratically inclined bureaucrat." And Bishop Welch in the same paper on March 14 says: "The greatest hope, however, which the situation holds is in the genial, democratic and sincere character of the Governor General, Baron Saito . . . His presence warrants . . . an attitude of hopeful expectation."

#### 4. Conferences with Missionaries

Before leaving Japan Baron Saito had conferred with one or more of the most respected missionary leaders there regarding the task he was undertaking. On arriving in Korea he took early steps to get into wholesome relations with the missionary body there. At his own request he met them in a body and later in September was presented with a statement of the reforms which in their opinion were needed. That statement constitutes a pamphlet of a dozen pages. An idea of its frankness and its proposals will be gathered from the following abstract:

To His Excellency Baron Saito,

Governor General of Chosen

The Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea respectfully presents to Your Excellency for your consideration the following communication:

We desire to express the great gratification with which we have heard of the plans for reform in administration. It was a keen disappointment to us, who had lived in Korea under the former government to find, that what we had expected from the Japanese administration after annexation, was not forthcoming, but that the military rule to which the country was subjected, restricted the religious liberty and educational freedom which had been enjoyed, introduced unjust discrimination against the Koreans, and eventually imposed upon the people such subjection and such harsh measures of oppression, as to

call forth from them the protest of the independence agitation of this year. The unarmed demonstrations at that time were met with such brutality, and such indignities were heaped upon the aged, upon women and girls, and upon the most cultured and refined of the people, that our hearts were stirred to their depths with indignation, and we were forced for the sake of humanity to give expression to our protests. Now we hear with satisfaction the promises of the new administration, and eagerly await the carrying out of the program of reform.

In accordance with the sincere and cordial invitation of the Governor General, expressed to the Federal Council through his personal representative, Mr. Shibata, we take this opportunity to lay before the Government what we deem to be the most imperative changes necessary, if real religious liberty and educational freedom are to be secured.

In presenting this statement with its suggestions for changes in governmental regulations or policy, we are not proposing anything in the nature of a settlement of political questions. What we present is a statement of our opinion as to what is necessary in order to secure real religious liberty, to promote the moral welfare of the people, and to ensure freedom for the church to develop, without being directly or indirectly hampered by the Government.

We urge that religious liberty, which is already guaranteed by the constitution of the Empire of Japan, as of all other great nations, be made effective.

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I.—In regard to our evangelistic work we respectfully request:—

1. That fewer restrictions be placed upon the church and upon missionaries.
2. That discrimination against Christians and against Christianity by officials be not allowed.
3. That the Government encourage the right of petition and complaint.

II.—In regard to educational work we respectfully request:—

1. That we be allowed to include the teaching of the Bible and religious exercises in the curricula of our church schools.
2. That restrictions on the use of the Korean language be removed.
3. That we be accorded more liberty in the management of our schools and freedom from unnecessary official interference.
4. That teachers and pupils be allowed liberty of conscience.
5. That Koreans be allowed the opportunities for education as are provided for Japanese, and that greater freedom be granted in the selection of textbooks and that restrictions on the study of Korean and universal history be removed.
6. That graduates of private schools holding Government permits be eligible for all privileges accorded to graduates of Government schools of the same grade.



7. That the Government do not impose upon private schools excessive financial requirements.

III.—In regard to medical work we respectfully request:—

1. That the details of the management of our hospitals be left to the staff without interference from officials.

IV.—In regard to Christian literature we respectfully request:—

1. That the censorship of Christian books be abolished.

2. That we be not restricted in our church newspaper, magazines and other publications to publishing merely church news and religious literature.

3. That Colporteurs and others engaged in selling the Bible, tracts and other Christian literature be not hindered by the local officials from freely carrying on their work.

V.—In regard to the holding of property and financial matters we respectfully request:—

1. Facilities for the incorporation of the Korean Church and of the Missions so that property can be held and registered in their names.

2. We have felt that the law requiring special permits for soliciting contributions for hospitals, schools and benevolent work to be too stringent.

3. We call the attention of the Government to the fact that church buildings and property have been destroyed by Government agents and that so far in most cases there has been no reparation.

VI.—Moral reform.

We request drastic reformation of the laws relating to the establishment of houses of prostitution, and we protest against the system of prostitution as permitted and protected by the Government, and forced upon the Korean people, outraging their customs and feelings.

We request reformation also in the laws affecting the production, manufacture and sale of opium and morphine.

We request also the reformation of the laws concerning the liquor traffic, and ask for the restoration of the power of local option which existed under the former Korean administration, by which the people of a village were able to prohibit the establishment of saloons in their vicinity. Now, under police protection licenses are issued and saloons established against the wishes of the people.

We request that the law which forbids the use of cigarettes by the Japanese under a certain age be made to apply to Koreans also.

We request the enactment of laws restricting child labor and regulating the conditions surrounding the laborers in factories and mines.

We request that Christian men who are convicted for political offenses only, be not forced to perform Sunday labor or other forms of work which violate their consciences.

In connection with this, we add the request that we be accorded the privilege of ministering to the religious and moral needs of those who are in prison.

#### Concluding statement.

In conclusion, as a missionary body we do most earnestly protest against the cruelty, barbarity and injustice which were so manifest in the conduct of the soldiers, gendarmes and police in meeting the unarmed demonstrations of the people; conduct which was in many places emulated by the civilian Japanese population with, in many cases, the connivance of the police, and without punishment by the authorities when their attention was brought to the facts.

We also protest against the cruel methods often used at the preliminary examinations of prisoners in order to extract confessions from them and to secure evidence against others.

We include in our protest the refusal of access to legal counsel before preliminary trial and the detention for long periods, sometimes in solitary confinement, before conviction.

We record our sincere gratification that the Imperial Government of Japan has, in part, withdrawn those responsible for offenses and has promised far-reaching reforms.

While recognizing that the Korean people have many just causes for resentment, we take this opportunity of recording our condemnation of assassination as an unjustifiable crime, and we express our thankfulness for Your Excellency's escape from the bomb thrown at the time of your arrival in Seoul.

We have read with deep appreciation the proclamations of Your Excellency, and heard Your Excellency's statements of your intention to reorganize the whole system of government.

All genuine reforms will be sympathetically observed, and we eagerly watch for signs of change from the former methods of the police. We regret to have to call the attention of Your Excellency to the fact that the infliction of severe corporal punishment, which has resulted in the death of some and the maiming of others for life, is still being continued. Several cases were admitted to the Severance Hospital last week, and six more applied for admission as late as September 28th.

We respectfully, yet more earnestly, urge upon Your Excellency the speedy abolition of racial discrimination against the Koreans in the matter of flogging and of police summary judgment.

We eagerly await the promised reforms and assure Your Excellency that all you accomplish will have our fullest appreciation.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Signed on behalf of the FEDERAL COUNCIL,  
HUGH MILLER, Chairman,  
B. W. BILLINGS, Secretary.

Seoul, September 29, 1919.



## 5. Conference of the New Governor General with Representative Koreans

Early in October the Governor General also convened a conference of some fifty Koreans, representing the thirteen provinces. The purpose was to discuss the question of the reforms desired. The result of the conference was the submission of a list of nineteen requests the burden of which was a demand for equal treatment with the Japanese. The full report of those demands has not come to hand but a newspaper report published in Japan gives the following summary:

The establishment of city councils in each town and district in preparation for future self-government;

Frequent meetings of Koreans from the provinces for an exchange of views;

Compulsory primary education;

Freedom of speech, meetings and publications;

Abolishment of the colonization policy;

Pardon for participants in the uprisings;

Sale to Koreans of all state lands formerly owned by the people;

Abolishment of the land appropriation laws;

Abolishment of the "censorship of the people."

## 6. Reforms Already Introduced

A number of reforms were soon put into operation. Among these were the removal of the sword as an emblem of authority from school teachers and railway officials, and abandonment of the military uniforms from all except soldiers and their officers. The restoration to Koreans of the right of using private burying grounds was granted at the special request of Koreans. Sarcastic reference to this reform is unjustified, since the Koreans themselves made special request for it, and were generally and deeply pleased to recover the old liberty.

The widely announced policy of "equal treatment and equal salaries for Japanese and Koreans of the same status" turns out to have been another instance of promises that miscarried. While basal salaries of the lowest grade police are not so markedly different, the bonus system produces differences that nullify the promises, and causes increased distrust and indignation on the part of the Koreans.

During the autumn the Governor General secured important changes in the personnel of the administration putting his own appointees in nearly all the key positions. His immediate subordinate, Dr. Midzumo, was a man of wide administrative experience in the home Government. The new Chief of Police, Mr. Akaike, had been Governor of Shidzuoka Ken (province). The entire police system was thus transferred from a military to a civil system. Japanese gendarmes numbering 1,135 and Korean gendarmes numbering 568 were discharged and 4,788 new recruits for police service were secured in Japan, of whom 3,334 had not before served as police. In order to fit them for their duties in Korea, Japanese pastors were invited to tell them the principles of Christianity. The gendarme system has been abolished; the police force now aggregates 16,313, of whom 7,520 are Koreans.

The change from the military gendarmes to the civil police was, however, made in such a blundering way as to secure the least possible psychological benefit. In too many cases the same men merely changed their uniforms with a change in the sign-boards over their offices from "Gendarme Headquarters" to "Police Headquarters." It was not easy for Koreans to realize that a new set of rules—civil not military—were to be enforced, or that the Chief of Police in Seoul was now a broadminded civilian and no longer an autocratic, insistent militarist.

Among the new higher officials are such men as Mr. Shibata, in charge of the Department of Education and Religion, secured from the Osaka Provincial office. He appointed as his special assistant a Japanese Christian pastor, Mr. Date, who was for many years in America and Hawaii as Commissioner of Immigration. In the section on Religion is another Christian pastor, Mr. Yoshikawa, formerly of Kanazawa. In the Department of Foreign Affairs are three Japanese Christians. It is stated on good authority that the Government is even seeking for the services of a foreign councilor.

"There have always been a number of (Japanese) Christians" writes Rev. Frank Herron Smith (Japan Advertiser March 30, 1920) "among the higher officials in Seoul. It was a strange coincidence that while many of the higher officials were returned to Japan when the administration was changed last summer, not one of these Christians was removed, and they are still here.

They are as fine, upstanding Christian laymen as one will find anywhere in the World. In addition three Christians were added to the Section of Religions in the Educational Department, and two to the Foreign Department. Two of these men are Methodists and two are graduates of good American colleges."

In November, Dr. Midzuno held in Tokyo a remarkable conference with about 200 missionaries. He reported to them the situation in Korea and the plans of the new Government General for reforms. Addresses were also made by representatives of the missionaries which were as frank and outspoken as those given to Baron Saito by the missionaries of Korea.

In December an extended announcement was made of proposed changes in the curricula of both the primary and higher schools. These changes are regarded with favor by Koreans as well as by missionaries, in so far as they go. All are, however, still "looking anxiously for an announcement of the repeal of the ordinance compelling all teaching to be done in the Japanese language after April 1, 1920, and forbidding the insertion of the Bible, even as an optional textbook, and the holding of any religious ceremonies in private schools."

As this manuscript goes to press word comes from Seoul of the announcement on March 7th of the new educational regulations, whereby private schools will be allowed to teach Korean children in their own language. Religion and the Bible may also be taught in private schools. If the announcement means what it says, the Government General has taken a highly important step in granting one of the most urgent requests of the missionaries and the Koreans.

Several important reforms urged by the "Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea" have also been instituted in regard to the relations of the Churches to the Government General. For instance: Application for official permission to open or establish a Church or preaching house is no longer required; a report, however, of such opening must be filed within ten days. The list of "religious propagators" heretofore required annually, is no longer required. Certain vexatious requirements as to Church statistics are annulled. Fines heretofore imposed for non-compliance with registration provisions are eliminated. But provision is made for the suspension or closure of Church buildings used for seditious purposes. Cor-



porations may now be formed for holding mission or religious property.

On January 6, 1920, according to recent despatches three daily independent newspapers in the Korean language were licensed in Seoul. This is in complete contrast with the repressive policy of the previous administration, under which every independent Korean paper was suppressed.

"The Chief of the Division of political police" writes Dr. Schofield (Japan Advertiser, March 12), under whose supervision the papers will be published, has evidenced a spirit of marked liberality." He has permitted "an old and bitter enemy of the Japanese administration to return to Korea as editor of one of the dailies. Pardon has also been given to another political offender that he may take up an important position on the same paper."

The weekly newspaper issued by the Federal Council of Protestant Evangelical Missions in Korea has also received permission to print secular news, hitherto denied on the ground that the paper professed to be a religious paper. This privilege has long been desired by the Missions. Its permission indicates an important change in governmental policy.

On January 19, 1920, the first draft of the regulations regarding self-government for the provinces of Korea was completed, thus indicating that the new Government General is proceeding with its plans as announced in September.

The "Central Council" (Korean) has recently been convened for the second time—the first session was held in October, 1919. The announcement is made that hereafter it will hold weekly sessions and "that the Government General will communicate its plans to the Council and hear its views."

While this pamphlet is in press word is received that the Supreme Court has rendered a decision that the "thirty-three signers of the Independence Manifesto are not to be prosecuted under the law concerning sedition, but that their offence was against the Peace Preservation Law." This decision is ascribed by our correspondent to the fact that one of the Judges of the Court is a prominent Japanese Christian. "The decision will not please the fire-eaters among the Japanese." "Relatives and friends (of the thirty-three signers) have been permitted to see them for some time past."

An important economic reform was the abolishment of certain regulations regarding the formation of companies, industrial and commercial. The old regulations had prevented Koreans from sharing in the developing wealth of the country. Japanese enterprises had been given every favor and opportunity. The new regulations open the doors to Korean enterprise also. "Already hundreds of new companies have been formed, exclusively of Koreans, capitalized anywhere between \$25,000 to \$5,000,000." (Japan Advertizer, March 14, 1920.) The new laws are intended to develop and encourage Koreans and they are responding.

### **7. Promise to Abolish Flogging**

In October 1919 announcement was made that the penalty of "flogging" would be abolished in April, 1920, and that pledge has been repeated on several occasions. Explanation was made that this barbarous custom was not introduced by Japan upon its annexation of Korea, but was merely taken over from the practice of the former Korean Government, as were many other customs. The official reason given for delay in its abolishment is that the alternative penalty is imprisonment, for which there is insufficient accommodation since the prisons thus far built have been on the basis of the prompt release of petty offenders. The officials therefore say that the change would require the building of additional prisons and that this needs time.

### **8. Governmental Relief Measures**

The Government General of Korea has also taken active steps towards repairing the losses caused to Koreans by soldiers and police. As stated in January by an official in Seoul, the sum of Y. 28,160 had been expended for relief in the case of burned villages and Y. 18,000 for rebuilding churches and schools. Japanese Christians, moreover, raised Y. 4,200 to help rebuild churches in Korea, which sum was sent to Korea in December, 1919, by the hands of a committee representing the churches.

An American missionary took active part for many weeks in administering relief to villagers whose homes had been burned. He testifies that "the provincial officials did all that I asked them to do. I first asked for Red Cross help for the wounded and sick; then for food for the sufferers. For some

six or seven weeks, or until after the wheat and barley harvest. they gave an average of three 'go' of good rice per person per day to all the people who had been burned out. . . . .  
Temporary shelter and barracks were built. . . . . Seed was given to them and farming utensils, free of cost. . . . .  
The Government also transported free of cost all the goods that the various Red Cross associations gave."

## 9. A Statement by Governor General Saito

Early in January the Governor General received a group of representative journalists and correspondents, speaking at length and in detail regarding his reform policies. The need of fundamental changes in the policy and methods of the previous administration were fully recognized. The aim of the new administration he stated to be the "promotion of popular welfare by introducing institutions of revolutionized civilization and so to attain the ultimate object of making Japanese and Koreans equal in political and social status . . . . . and the furtherance of popular prosperity and happiness. . . . . It is my intention to abolish such old institutions and measures as were or might be in the future likely to become obstacles in the way of the mutual understanding of governors and governed, and, in order to open free and unfettered channels for interchange of view, to do away with formality in government and all red-tapeism."

Laws and orders will be simplified as much as possible. . . . .  
Freedom of speech and meeting will be granted as far as such freedom does not interfere with the maintenance of public peace and order, while the greatest effort will be put forth to conduce to the stability of the national life, the promotion of national aspirations, and the enhancement of the general well-being by carrying out reform in education, industry, communication, sanitation, social relief work and all other administrative affairs. . . . . A great deal will depend on the co-operation of local corporations. Investigations and studies are already being pushed on with a view to introducing a system of local self-government at the first proper opportunity. . . . . In short, my aim lies in the promotion and development of the national life and the laying of the foundation of a civilized government.

In the coming fiscal year the ancient institution of flogging will be ended and the educational machinery extended. . . . . No extended reform work can be executed all at once and on the spur of the moment. It requires time. For all things there is a certain order of procedure. . . . . I trust the time will come when I shall have convinced the public of my good faith and loyalty.



### III. CONTINUANCE OF THE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT

#### 1. Repeated "Uprisings" and Continued Arrests

In spite of the new policy adopted by the Japanese Imperial Government and in spite of the change of governors and the introduction of important reforms and promises of others along the lines desired by the revolutionists, as indicated in the foregoing sections, the Independence Movement is still maintained. This is partly because the movement aims at national independence and is therefore not satisfied with reforms that leave the country subject to Japan; partly because the reforms are not regarded as going far enough; partly because some of the serious abuses are still continued, and partly because the intentions of Japan are not trusted. Occasional uprisings have been reported from time to time, followed by fresh arrests. Moreover, during the autumn, reports were current of continued brutal treatment on the part of the police. The statement of the missionaries to Baron Saito cites one instance. On the day before Christmas five men were taken to the Severance Hospital in Seoul, members of a group of sixteen who had been flogged and discharged.

Early in January, according to a dispatch given to the Press on March 6th, the police discovered the "Korean Women's Patriotic Association." Some 80 women were arrested including, according to the report, 29 nurses and employes of the Severance Hospital, 11 teachers and students of the Chongsin Girls' School, and 13 nurses and employes of the Women's Hospital. The connection of these persons with missionaries was emphasized by the *Seoul Press*.

On January 8th a dispatch published in Tokyo told of the arrest of some 20 women participating in a public "demonstration" of whom four were nurses, carrying a banner with the inscription, "Long live the independence of Korea."

A report published in Japan on March 19, 1920, states that Rev. E. M. Mowry had been deprived by the Provincial Government of Pyengyang, of his recognition as principal of the Boys' and Girls' Mission Schools. The cause assigned was that in spite of warning he had not prevented the pupils from celebrating "Independence Day." The higher pupils had absented themselves from school en bloc and had shouted "Mansei."

## 2. The Case of the Pai Chai Haktang and Higher Common School

On March 8, 1920, a cable was published in New York, stating that two Mission Schools in Seoul had been closed by the police because the principals had not prevented the pupils from celebrating "Independence Day." The facts are now reported by several correspondents.

Six communications from the Provincial Governor had strictly forbidden not only "celebrations" but even "failure to attend school." The Principal of the Pai Chai School, a missionary, read the official notices to the entire school, explained the meaning and advised implicit obedience. Monday, March 1st, precaution was taken to keep any possible "agitators" from meeting any of the boys at the entrance to the school. Representatives of the police, the Provincial Government and the Government General, inspected every room in the school and called the roll themselves. In the afternoon, however, the entire body of the students absented themselves.

At chapel next morning the Principal told the boys—152 pupils being present—that they had broken the school rules and would all be punished. Government inspectors were present and called the roll again. The Principal secured a promise from the boys that they would attend the afternoon session. This promise was kept. During the lunch recess, however, "shouting from beyond the city wall found a response in commotion among the boys who were playing around the grounds." On the assembling of the school, the chief building was promptly surrounded by a cordon of police. On asking the reason, the Principal was informed by the Japanese that the boys had shouted "Mansei." The boys and also teachers denied the charge, though "there was extra stamping as the boys went upstairs." Prolonged discussion between the officials and the Principal occupied the afternoon. "At about seven in the evening, the police began the machinery of inquisition. . . . The questioning kept on till just before midnight, when the police took with them 14 students and one teacher for further examination."

The next day the Principal secured from the teachers and pupils the facts as to the inquisition. "A total of 46 were maltreated in one or more of the following ways: Slapping, punch-

ing, kicking, wrists twisted, an object inserted between the fingers and these pressed until the blood started."

That evening the Principal was notified that his "permit to act as Principal had been revoked." It does not appear that the school was ordered closed.

Governor General Admiral Saito was in Tokyo at the time. When asked in regard to the situation, he expressed deep regret at what had occurred, and added that as he had no information as to details he could make no comment. But he did say, as reported that "what has happened is probably a technical breach." He was much disturbed, however, because the Diet had suddenly been dissolved, leaving him "without sufficient funds to carry on the administration." This will affect the date of carrying into effect the pledge to "abolish flogging as a punishment."

Later word brings the information that the Principal was summoned by wire to Tokyo by Bishop Welch. The two were permitted to have an audience with the Governor General and a promise was made to re-open the case on the return of the Governor General to Seoul. The issue between the local officials and the school Principals "is whether foreign principals are to investigate political matters at the behest of the police." The Principals take the ground that such action would involve themselves in politics from which as missionaries they are strictly required to abstain.

### **3. The Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea**

The headquarters in the Far East of the Korean Independence Movement are in Shanghai. From thence, as headquarters, the various uprisings and agitations in Korea are apparently engineered. At Shanghai is located the so-called Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea. It claims to have been established by the proper election of delegates, who convened in Seoul, Korea, April 23, 1919, and adopted a Constitution creating the Republic. They also, as reported, elected a National Council, with Mr. Syngman Rhee, now in the United States, as President of the Republic and Mr. Tong Hui Yee in Shanghai, China, as Prime Minister.

The "Korean Commission to America and Europe" was sent abroad and presented its appeal in Paris. It is now established



at Washington, D. C. Important and well edited documents have been published and widely circulated.

#### **4. The Movement in the United States for Korean Independence**

The most important support for the movement outside of Korea and Shanghai is here in the United States. The Bureau of Information for the Republic of Korea and the Korean Students' League of America have their headquarters in Philadelphia. The same offices are also used by the Philadelphia League of the Friends of Korea. This latter organization consists exclusively of American citizens. The Korean Review gives a monthly report of all matters of interest connected with the movement. A program for raising a loan of \$5,000,000, on certificates to be paid with interest "within one year after the recognition of the Republic of Korea by the United States" has been launched by the Koreans.

Leagues of the Friends of Korea have been established in fourteen cities of the United States. Under the influence of able Korean and American speakers, resolutions are passed and ordered sent to President Wilson, to Congress and to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, calling for sympathy and aid by the Government of the United States for the Korean people in their aspirations for liberty and a democratic government. In September, Senator Phelan of California introduced a resolution to this effect which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

#### **IV. THE PROBLEM CONFRONTING AMERICANS**

The facts given in the foregoing sections make it clear that problems of a serious nature are arising in which American citizens have grave responsibilities.

It is natural that Korean patriots should appeal to American Christians. For the Christians of America for more than thirty years have been so interested in that country as to maintain there unusually large and successful missions. Over 400 American missionaries are now in Korea, each with a circle of supporters and personal friends in America. Liberty-loving Americans who boil with indignation over wrongs and crimes against weak and dependent peoples naturally respond with deep sympathy for Koreans and desire to help them in every proper way.

But here appear a number of perplexing questions. What can and what may Americans rightly do? By what steps can the Korean people be protected and their culture be preserved? What kind of influence can and should be brought to bear upon Japan? In a word, what duty toward Korea and toward Japan have American Christians under present world conditions? Should we support and encourage radical patriotic Koreans in their demands for immediate independence? Should we lead them to expect help from America or from American Christians in their political enterprise? If we should, by what methods can we render that aid? And what would be the probable consequences? To Korea? To Japan? And to our mutual relations? If we should not, what should we do?

The Commission on Relations with the Orient has given careful study to these matters at many meetings. Certain facts and considerations it desires to state with clearness and directness for information and suggestion to those who are considering their duty in regard to these momentous issues.

1. Americans naturally and inevitably sympathize with the patriotic aspirations of every people struggling for independence from an alien rule and especially from one that has been so harsh, militaristic and has so signally failed to give reasonable consideration to the feelings of the people as appears to have been the case in Korea. The intrinsic right of every people to justice and fair-dealing, to the preservation of its own language and literature; to its customs and culture where these are not repellant to the conscience of the world; and to a reasonable degree of autonomy, we believe to be axiomatic.

2. The policy, therefore, of the former Japanese military Government General in Korea to force the assimilation of the Korean people by the Japanese in such a way as to obliterate the Korean language and cherished Korean customs impresses Americans as intrinsically unjust.

That policy also appears to Americans to be both futile and foolish. Germany especially tried it with utmost vigor for decades on various annexed areas, but in vain.

3. The era of nations maintaining their existence and their place in the world on the basis of military power is, we hope, coming to an end. But it is not yet gone. Korea became subject to Japan because she was too weak to resist the encroach-

ments first of China, then of Russia and finally of Japan. Under the world system that has thus far prevailed, small and weak peoples in nearly every part of the world have succumbed to powerful and aggressive nations. The Far East has for decades been coming under the political domination of competing European powers. Japan saved herself from subjection to them by developing with extraordinary speed and skill a reorganized social, industrial and governmental life, together with great military power. China, large though she is, has been falling before those European powers and before Japan for lack of a similar ability to adjust her life and her government to world conditions.

4. What is to happen in international relations during the coming decades? The great military peoples will no doubt watch each other with closest care to see if the rest are sincere and honest in the renunciation of policies of expansion by military power, even if some form of international organization may be set up. In no part of the world do small subject nations have any prospect whatever of attaining independence save through the adoption by the great powers of more liberal policies toward their hitherto subject peoples, and through the establishment of some form of associated international responsibility for such nations.

5. Americans, as a rule, regard the chief issue in Korea as essentially one of humanity and justice for Koreans. Japan and many Koreans regard the chief issue as political. Japan sees it as involving her security and integrity as an empire. An independent Korea liable to become again a possible strategic foothold for a hostile, powerful foe, would be dangerous for Japan. Under present world conditions, accordingly, Japan no doubt feels that she could not possibly consent to Korean independence. She would doubtless feel it necessary to exert her entire military power to prevent it.

6. That America as a nation would under existing conditions attempt to intervene in a military way to help free Korea from Japanese rule is entirely out of the question.

7. Under existing international conditions, therefore, and especially under those existing in the Far East, will not continued effort on the part of Koreans to secure immediate inde-



pendence have three results:—(1) Increasing, prolonged and useless tragedy in Korea, involving the punishment of the unarmed revolutionists and of those who are even suspected of sympathizing with them; (2) more complete military domination by Japan; and (3) failure to secure even the promised reforms?

8. Is there then no hope for Korea? Must she fall back into hopeless despair and submit to ignoble extinction? By no means. The display of such high-spirited and noble patriotism as has come from tens of thousands of Koreans during the past year has inspired all friends of Korea with new respect for the people and new hope for their future.

9. Friends of Korea should remember that readiness for independence under a democratic form of government depends on the fitness of a people trained in self-control and educated for citizenship. Such a goal cannot be reached at a single stride. The local autonomy promised by Japan, if carried into effect, may be wisely utilized as a needful step to the final end. It is not to be lightly assumed that Japan will never grant autonomy or even independence. Already certain Japanese political leaders are advocating the former while certain publicists are discussing the latter.

10. It should be clearly recognized that the Korean question is not primarily an issue between paganism and Christianity as some are saying. The Japanese Government General is not seeking "to wipe out Christianity in Korea." If the police, gendarmes and other government officials spy upon, arrest and terrorize Christians and invade and violate churches, as they have been doing, it is because they suspect political aims and activities among Christians and in the churches. Christian teaching and the Christian life undoubtedly develop personality and initiative, with the spirit of noble patriotism and with a passion for justice, righteousness and fair play. It has been almost inevitable, therefore, that a Government bent on forced assimilation and humiliating subordination of the Korean people, should find a serious obstacle in the Christian churches. Yet the Government General has repeatedly declared that it seeks to suppress sedition, not Christianity. The Korean question is primarily political and not religious. To confuse or to identify these issues is a grave error.

## CONCLUSION

In the light of these considerations what is the duty of American friends of Korea and of Japan?

1. Should we not make clear to them both our indignation at the cruelties practiced in the police examinations and punishments and our conviction that these practices should cease at once?

2. Should we not let Japan know that we are watching with keenest interest and attention the method of her procedures in Korea and earnestly urge her to carry through the promised reforms promptly and effectively?

3. Should we not support the elements in Japan that are guided by high ideals in their efforts to secure full rights and fair dealings for Koreans?

4. Should we not advise our Korean brethren to co-operate with, rather than to oppose the Government General in its plans and efforts to introduce reforms?

5. Should we not further make clear to them both:—

(a) Our abiding hope that ultimately Korea will secure and Japan will grant either independence, or such a measure of autonomy as shall seem to the Korean people the most desirable means of realizing their destiny.

(b) Our belief that under present world conditions the important and practical objective for immediate effort is to secure effective reforms by which to ensure economic justice, educational and religious liberty, freedom of press, of speech and of assembly and as large a measure as possible of genuine local self-government. These are inherent rights and legitimate objects for immediate attainment and should be fully recognized and granted by Japan.

(c) Our conviction that the promptness and the reality with which Japan grants these reforms and rights will measure her fitness to administer government in Korea and will also prove an important factor in influencing American attitude toward Japan.

We rejoice in the recent declaration of Baron Shibusawa that "The Golden Rule is as effective in international relations as it is between individuals and that those nations will profit most who base their external policies upon moral principles." We need mutually to remind each other that the Golden Rule must be put into actual practice if it is to produce its expected effects.







